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| Please note: Several FAQs have been updated to reflect revised answers in light of changes made to the RFP (Version 3, released on February 16, 2018) and related documents. These new answers are highlighted below. | | | |
| FAQ 1 | How long can I submit FAQ questions and when will they be posted? | The HPC will accept questions through the FAQ submission deadline of March 23, 2018, with the final FAQ posting approximately one week later. Questions submitted through the FAQ process will be answered on a rolling basis with HPC staff posting answers on an approximately weekly basis. | 1/19/2018 |
| RFP Re-Posting 1 | Do the changes made in version 3 of the RFP impact the HPC Terms and Conditions? | The posted HPC Terms and Conditions are provisional. The final version of the Terms and Conditions which Awardees will be required to sign prior to contract execution will be updated at that time. | 2/16/2018 |
| Budgeting 1 | Are fringe or indirect costs allowed as reimbursable elements of the budget? | Fringe benefits are not eligible for reimbursement by the HPC but may be included in the Applicant's Budget Proposal and counted toward the Applicant's required contribution to the Initiative. Indirect costs are not eligible for reimbursement by the HPC and may not appear on the Budget Proposal. | 1/19/2018 Updated 2/23/2018 |
| Budgeting 2 | In what ways can the 25% match be achieved? | SHIFT-Care is structured as a reimbursement contract. The Budget must include all costs directly associated with the implementation of the Initiative. Every cost on the Budget, with the exception of fringe benefits, is eligible for reimbursement, up to the Award cap, which may not exceed \$750,000. Further, the HPC requires an Applicant contribution. This contribution must be at least 25% of the total Initiative cost, i.e., the Grand Total of the Initiative on the Budget. | 1/19/2018 Updated 2/16/2018 |
| Budgeting 3 | Will there be a cap on money for purchase of technology? | There is no cap on technology expenses. The total Award may not exceed \$750,000. | 1/19/2018 |
| Budgeting 4 | Can grant funding be used for transportation? | Yes | 1/26/2018 |
| Budgeting 5 | Can DSRIP serve as the funding source for the in-kind contribution? | The HPC does not have any restrictions on the source of the Applicant's contribution. Please note that the HPC does not approve DSRIP budgets and any decision relating to DSRIP is determined by MassHealth. | 2/2/2018 Updated 2/16/2018 |
| Budgeting 6 | Do all Partners have to be allocated grant funds? | No, funding for Partners is not a requirement. However, funding of Partners in the proposed Initiative is a competitive factor described in Section V of the RFP. The HPC does not have a minimum amount of funding that Applicants should provide to Partners but will review proposed budgets to assess overall impact of funding on the Initiative. | 2/2/2018 |
| Budgeting 7 | Can existing salaries be included in the HPC portion of the budget? | Yes, to the extent an existing employee will be assuming new responsibilities in support of the proposed Initiative, the portion of the employee's salary attributable to the Initiative may be reimbursed by the HPC. | 2/2/2018 |
| Budgeting 8 | Does the in-kind funding have to come from the Applicant/partners or can it come from outside grant funding or gift money? | The HPC does not have any restrictions on the source of the Applicant's contribution. | 2/2/2018 Updated 2/16/2018 |
| Budgeting 9 | Can staff salaries be covered during the Preparation period for on-boarding? | Yes. | 2/23/2018 |
| Budgeting 10 | Does the SHIFT grant funding (or grant funded positions) come with any restriction as it relates to 3rd party billable activities. For example, can an employed medical provider, whose salary is supported by the SHIFT grant, bill an insurance company for a relevant medical procedure? | As noted in the procurement documents (see, for example, section 6.2 of the HPC Terms and Conditions), costs that are specified in the Budget and are reimbursed by the HPC may not be charged to any other funding source. However, services provided by Initiative staff whose salaries are reimbursed by the HPC may be billed to a third party as appropriate. | 2/23/2018 |
| Eligibility 1 | Are BHCPs considered ACO participants for the purpose of being an eligible entity? | Yes, if the Behavioral Health Community Partner meets the definition of ACO Participant in Section III of the RFP. | 1/19/2018 |
| Eligibility 2 | Can large behavioral health organizations that are certified ACOs be considered applicants or is this role restricted to the CHART eligible hospitals? In other words can a hospital be a partner rather than the applicant? | Any Provider or Provider Organization may be an Applicant on a Proposal, as defined in Section III of the RFP. A hospital may be a Partner instead of the Applicant as long as it meets the definition of Partner as stated in Section III of the RFP. | 1/19/2018 |
| Eligibility 3 | For track 2b, are applicants restricted to Hospitals with EDs? | Yes, an Applicant for Track 2b must be a hospital with an Emergency Department. | 1/19/2018 |
| Eligibility 4 | Can a government (agency local or state) serve as a Partner? | A government agency may serve as a Partner if it meets the definition of Partner in Section III of the RFP. | 1/19/2018 |
| Eligibility 5 | Could an application be submitted by a payer partnering with a provider organization? | Payers are not eligible Applicants (see Section III of the RFP for definition of Eligible Entity). | 1/19/2018 |
| Eligibility 6 | Would ACO entities be considered separate applicant organizations from their affiliated hospital organizations? | Yes, ACOs and affiliated hospitals may be considered separate Applicants as long as they both meet the definition of Applicant as stated in the RFP (Section III). | 1/19/2018 |
| Eligibility 7 | Are current HPC grantees eligible to apply for the SHIFT-Care Challenge? | Yes, recipients of current and past HPC funding opportunities are eligible to apply as long as they are eligible Applicants (see Section III of the RFP for definition of Eligible Entity). | 1/19/2018 |

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| Eligibility 8 | Is a for-profit company (e.g., a digital health company) working with an eligible Provider or Provider Organization able to be a SHIFT-Care Applicant? | No. Only a Provider or Provider Organization is an Eligible Entity as described in Section III of the RFP. | 1/26/2018 |
| Eligibility 9 | May multiple participants in a single ACO (e.g., a medical group practicing under a single TIN and an acute care hospital) each receive its own award? | Yes | 1/26/2018 |
| Eligibility 10 | Does the operator of a PACE plan count as a provider to be a qualified applicant for a grant submission? | As long as the operator meets the definition of Provider or Provider Organization in Section III of the RFP, then it is an Eligible Entity. | 2/2/2018 |
| Eligibility 11 | Is a MCO-administered MassHealth ACO participating in DSRIP eligible to apply to Track 1 as long as they can assure non-duplication of funding? | Yes, as long as Applicant is an Eligible Entity as defined in Section III of the RFP. | 2/8/2018 |
| Eligibility 12 | Can you please provide additional information on how hospitals are deemed CHART-eligible and how a hospital might become eligible? | CHART eligibility is established by criteria specified in statute and the HPC's regulation (see G.L. c. 29, §2GGGG and 958 CMR 5.00). The three CHART eligibility requirements are: (1) the hospital must not be a major teaching hospital; (2) the hospital must have relative prices that are lower than the statewide median relative price as determined by the Center for Health Information and Analysis; and, (3) the hospital must be non-profit. | 2/23/2018 |
| Eligibility 13 | If we are a large behavioral health organization, are we eligible for Track 2a? | Yes, see the definition of Eligible Entity in the RFP (Section III). Note: For Track 2a, if the Applicant is a Behavioral Health Provider, partnership with a medical care Provider is required. | 2/23/2018 |
| Evaluation 1 | Can you share any specifics (such as criteria, scope, and depth) you are seeking for the evaluation of the intervention? | The HPC seeks an evaluation plan that builds the evidence base for the proposed care delivery model. An evaluation plan must be designed to determine the Initiative's performance on its primary aim and intermediate results, compared to a baseline or a comparison group. The baseline or comparison group should be thoughtfully constructed to minimize threats to validity of the conclusions. Applicants are welcome to include additional relevant elements, such as patient experience, or implementation evaluation, in the evaluation plan. The HPC has no specific requirement for methods. Applicants are required to explain why the proposed methods are appropriate (See Applicant Initiative Response Template (AIR) question 3). | 1/19/2018 |
| Evaluation 2 | Are there any requirements about who is eligible to perform the evaluation (i.e. could graduate students perform it or does it have to be an outside evaluator?) | The HPC does not have specific requirements for who may perform the evaluation. However, the qualifications and experience of the individuals designing and overseeing the evaluation will be considered during review and selection, as part of the assessment of the strength and feasibility of the proposed evaluation design (see RFP p. 12). | 1/19/2018 |
| Evaluation 3 | Can grantees spend award dollars to fund the evaluation? | Yes | 1/19/2018 |
| Operational Response 1 | The narrative portion of the response is limited to 20 pages, excluding required attachments. Does the response need to include the text of the questions or is just the number of the question being answered sufficient? | The Applicant Initiative Response is limited to 20 pages excluding attachments but including the text of the questions. Applicants must not remove the text of the questions in their responses. | 1/19/2018 |
| Partner/Partnership 1 | If you are both a mental health and medical provider, who should partner with for track 2a? | If the Applicant already provides outpatient behavioral health care and medical care, the Applicant meets the partnership requirement for track 2A, and partnership with an external provider of outpatient behavioral health services or medical care is not required. If the Applicant does not provide both behavioral health services and medical care internally, partnership is required as explained in section I.B. of the RFP. | 2/8/2018 |
| Period of Performance 1 | Is the program expected to continue throughout both the Performance Period and the Evaluation Period? Or is the 6 month evaluation period for data analysis only? | The Initiative is expected to continue during the Preparation and Implementation Periods for a total of 21 months. Additional time is allotted to finalize evaluation deliverables as may be necessary. | 2/23/2018 |
| Proposal Submission 1 | Will letters of agreement/support be accepted to demonstrate the strength of a partnership or ACO commitment to the Initiative? | Yes, letters of support, memoranda of understanding, and other documents that address a partner's/ACO's willingness to work together with the Applicant will be accepted as part of a Proposal. | 1/26/2018 |
| Selection Criteria 1 | The RFP states that in determining awards, preference will be given to HPC-certified ACOs (including provisionally certified ACOs), ACO Participants, and CHART-eligible hospitals. Does this mean that in order to receive such preference an entity must be both part of an HPC-certified ACO and be CHART-eligible? | Preference will be given to an entity meeting one or more of the following criteria: the entity is an HPC-certified ACO (or a provisionally-certified ACO), the entity is an ACO Participant, and/or the entity is a CHART-eligible hospital. An Applicant does not have to be both an ACO/ACO Participant and a CHART-eligible hospital for this selection preference. | 1/19/2018 |
| Selection Criteria 2 | Is there a preference for the lead organization to be a hospital or community based organization? | The Applicant must be an Eligible Entity as defined in Section III of the RFP | 1/19/2018 |
| Selection Criteria 3 | Is the intent to fund programs in every county across the state? | The HPC will evaluate all Proposals that meet the minimum requirements described in Section VI of the RFP, in accordance with the selection criteria detailed in Section V of the RFP. | 1/19/2018 |

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| Selection Criteria 4 | How will HPC assess the "strength of evidence base of care delivery model in reducing avoidable acute care utilization?" | The HPC will review the Proposal for references to literature and other sources or supporting material which demonstrate how the model to be deployed by the Applicant's proposed Initiative has worked to drive improvements in care delivery consistent with the goals of the SHIFT-Care Challenge | 1/26/2018 |
| Selection Criteria 5 | The RFP states that preferred entities are hospitals that are part of an HPC-certified ACO (including provisionally certified ACOs) and are CHART-eligible. Does this response apply to track 2b or will preference for 2b be given to entities that are part of an ACO AND are CHART-eligible? | Preference will be given to Applicants that are an HPC-certified ACO (including provisionally certified ACOs), an ACO Participant, and/or are CHART-eligible. An Applicant must be in one of these three categories in order to receive preference. This preference applies to Track 2b Applicants as well as Track 1 and 2a. | 2/23/2018 |
| Target Population 1 | Can the funding be used to expand DSRIP funded programs to serve non-Mass health ACO members? | Yes. | 1/19/2018 |
| Target Population 2 | Can you describe the target population in more detail? Who's eligible, who's not? Can they be uninsured, undocumented, incarcerated, etc.? Please also clarify the exclusion of CP enrollees--aren't they all eligible for flexible funds? Are ACO enrollees that are not CP enrollees eligible? | Please see Section II.B of the RFP for target population exclusions. | 1/19/2018 Updated 2/16/2018 |
| Target Population 3 | Could you confirm whether or not applicants can propose populations with SUD that do not have SMI? | Yes, as long as the target population meets the criteria listed in Section II.B of the RFP. | 1/19/2018 Updated 2/16/2018 |
| Target Population 4 | Are all MassHealth Community Partner populations excluded from SHIFT-Care Track 1 target populations or just a narrowly defined subset? | Only a narrowly defined subset of engaged CP population is excluded from funding for coordination and services for Track 1. See Section II.B of the RFP for more detail. | 1/26/2018 Updated 2/16/2018 |
| Target Population 5 | Can the target population include children or is this targeted to complex adult patients only when it comes to decreasing rehospitalizations and acute care visits? | Target populations for Tracks 1 and 2a may include children. Target populations for Track 2b may not include children under 18. | 1/26/2018 |
| Target Population 6 | Our program is currently looking to expand its social work services. We are planning to apply to the Track 1 of the SHIFT Care Challenge grant and are wondering if you would support programs whose social services are provided primarily to families instead of children? | Yes | 1/26/2018 |
| Target Population 7 | For "CP population," it is our understanding that children < 21 will not be using the CP system for BH, so how will the eligible population be defined for children if they are not engaging with CP services but are engaging in CBHI / have serious BH needs? | Children are eligible to be included in the target populations for Track 1 and Track 2a. | 1/26/2018 Updated 2/16/2018 |
| Target Population 8 | Can an individual who is BH CP eligible but not engaged be part of track 1? Could we propose an intervention where we target those who are BH CP eligible but not engaged after a certain period (i.e. 90 days)? | No | 1/26/2018 |
| Target Population 9 | Track 1 excludes MassHealth CP populations (BH/LTSS) who are eligible for flexible services. Since we still don't know what the flexible services will be, could you provide any additional guidance on exactly what the excluded population is here? | Please see Section II.B of the RFP for detail on target population exclusions. | 1/26/2018 Updated 2/16/2018 |
| Target Population 10 | For Track 2a can the target population be payer agnostic? Or must it specifically exclude MassHealth ACO patients? | There are track specific target population exclusions for MassHealth ACO and CP populations as noted in section I.B of the RFP and in the Applicant Initiative Response Template. Otherwise, the target population can be proposed without regard to payer. | 2/8/2018 |
| Target Population 11 | We are not a MassHealth ACO. Are there any limitations to the type of patients that we can serve with SHIFT Care funds? | Target population exclusions apply to MassHealth and Community Partner patients only. Please see Section II.B of the RFP for further information. | 2/23/2018 |
| Target Population 12 | One of our potential partners is a BH Community Partner to MassHealth ACOs. As such, the exclusions stated in the RFP are related to services to MH-ACO/BHCP patients only, not to the organization itself in terms of partnership? Is that correct? | Yes, Applicants may partner with any organization that provides clinical or non-clinical services to the target population in service of the Initiative, or otherwise collaborates with the Applicant on payment, service delivery, or analysis for the proposed Initiative, typically with shared aim statement and/or intermediate measure goals. SHIFT-Care has target population exclusions for patients, not for Partner organizations. | 2/23/2018 |
| Target Population 13 | Community Service Agencies receive DSRIP dollars. Are those patients excluded from the target population? | Please refer to Section II.B of the RFP for detail on target population exclusions. | 2/23/2018 |

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| Target Population 14 | For Track 2b patient eligibility: Assuming patients are 18 yrs or older, are there restrictions on patient population eligibility as in other tracks? | No, there are no restrictions on Track 2b target population eligibility other than the patients having to be 18 years or older. | 2/23/2018 |
| Tracks 1 | Are Tracks 2a and 2b considered one award? | Each Track is a separate application and award, and Applicants considering applying for more than one Track should submit a separate application for each track. There are a total of three application pathways as part of the SHIFT-Care challenge. | 1/19/2018 |
| Tracks 2 | Is patient enrollment in a substance use treatment program considered an acceptable intermediate result for Track 2? | Yes (see page 15 of the RFP) | 1/26/2018 |